URS

MEETING REPORT

Client: CTDOT
Job Number: 171-366
Project Name: Central Connecticut Rail Study
Issue Date: February 18, 2013
Location: Central Connecticut Chambers of Commerce (Bristol, CT)

Central Connecticut Rail Study
Study Advisory Committee Meeting #1
February 7, 2013 – 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

The first meeting of the Study Advisory Committee (SAC) for the Central Connecticut Rail Study (CCRS) was held on February 7, 2013 at the offices of the Central Connecticut Chambers of Commerce in Bristol. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce SAC members to the CCRS and update them on the study's progress. The Study Team also sought input on the CCRS purpose and need statement, preliminary alternatives, and potential station locations. The following is a report of this meeting:

Agenda:

1. Introductions
2. Study Overview and Schedule
3. Completed Activities
    a. Base Mapping
    b. Review of Previous Studies
    c. Existing Conditions Report
    d. Intercept and Online Surveys
4. Current Activities
    a. Purpose and Need Statement
    b. Preliminary Alternatives Development and Evaluation
    c. Station Guidelines and Potential Locations
5. Next Steps

Presentation:

Andy Davis of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) opened the meeting by giving a brief introduction to the CCRS. He explained that CTDOT has contracted with URS Corporation to complete this Study, which began in Spring 2012. Mr. Davis summarized the Study's completed work-to-date and explained that this meeting was an opportunity to get feedback from the SAC. He asked attendees to introduce themselves and then turned the slide presentation over to Stephen Gazillo of URS.

Mr. Gazillo reiterated the agenda for the meeting and then gave a further overview of the CCRS. He explained that the CCRS is a transportation planning study and market analysis that is being conducted to determine the need and feasibility of enhanced passenger rail or transit service between Waterbury and Berlin. The Study will also consider existing and future freight service. A Study website has been created (www.centralctrailstudy.com), and this website includes documents, updates, news, etc. (*NOTE: In the version of the presentation distributed at the meeting, the website address appears incorrectly. The error has been corrected in the version of the presentation attached to this meeting report.*)

Mr. Gazillo showed a map of the Study Corridor, which is the existing Pan-Am rail line, which runs for approximately 24 miles through Waterbury, Plymouth, Bristol, Plainville, New Britain, and Berlin. He also showed the Study Corridor in relation to the regional system of passenger rail. On the western end, the Study Corridor links to the Metro-North Waterbury Branch, and in the East it connects to Amtrak's New Haven-Hartford-Springfield line. Both of these connecting lines link into the Northeast Corridor, which runs south to New York and north to Boston. Mr. Gazillo also noted that the Study Corridor connects to the Patriot Corridor freight system. The Patriot Corridor is the 155-mile freight rail route running between Mechanicville, NY (greater Albany area) and Ayer, MA (greater Boston area).

The CCRS is expected to run through Winter 2014 with three SAC meetings (Winter 2013, Fall 2013, Winter 2014) and two public meetings (Spring 2013, Winter 2014). The next major step in the schedule is to develop preliminary alternatives, which will occur in Spring 2013 ahead of the first public meeting.

The Study Team has completed several documents. First, is a set of base maps showing the entire corridor and a 500' buffer from the center of the rail. This mapping can be downloaded from the Study website. The Study Team has also reviewed a number of previous studies to gather information that could be used to inform the CCRS. A summary of this information can be found in the *Review of Previous Studies* document on the Study website.

In November 2012, the Study Team completed *Existing Conditions Report: Demographics and Transportation.* The purpose of the report is to identify current demographic and socioeconomic conditions as well as existing transportation services and infrastructure in the Study Corridor. Mr. Gazillo shared the following findings from this report:

- Demographics
    - There are approximately 300,000 residents in the Study Corridor
        - 2.7% growth between 2000 and 2010
        - New Britain, Waterbury, and Bristol are the most populous municipalities
    - The Study Corridor is more racially diverse than the State as a whole
        - This is due to the diverse populations of New Britain and Waterbury
    - Study Corridor has lower income and educational attainment levels than the State
    - The Study Corridor is similar to Connecticut in terms of modal split, but with less transit and more driving alone
        - Only Waterbury comes close to the average state transit mode share for transit.
    - The majority of residents in the Study Corridor work in the same town where they live (22.8%), elsewhere in the Study Corridor (11.6%), or elsewhere in Hartford County (23.3%). 1,750 people who live in the Study Corridor work in NYC (1.4%).
    - The majority of people who work in the Study Corridor live in the same town (26.2%), elsewhere in the Study Corridor (13.3%), or elsewhere in Hartford County (19.0%). 557 people who work in the Study Corridor live in NYC (0.5%).
    - When looking at the combined work trips starting or ending in the Study Corridor, the majority of trips are fully contained within the Study Corridor. At the same time, though, there is a concentration of trips starting and/or ending in towns along rail, and there is interchange between the Study Corridor and NYC (2,307 / 1.0%).
        - *A meeting attendee asked if the trips to NYC were daily trips. The data was self-reported to the Census Journey-to-Work, so that information is unclear. Previous studies have indicated that some of the interchange between the Study Corridor and NYC is through regional telecommuting, not through physical trips.*

- When comparing the total number of work trips in 2000 vs. 2010, it becomes apparent that even though the largest percentage of trips is contained within the Study Corridor, the largest losses of trips have occurred in Bristol, New Britain, and Waterbury. Over this same period, interchange between the Study Corridor and Hartford, Manhattan, and Torrington has increased the most. This may be indicative of the economic downturn during this period, but it can also signal a move to a more regional economy.

- Passenger Rail
  - The Study Corridor had passenger service until 1960, though none exists today
  - The municipalities on the ends of the Corridor are served by passenger rail
    - Metro-North Railroad: Waterbury Station
      - Waterbury Branch runs from Bridgeport off of the New Haven Mainline
      - 15 weekday trains / 10 weekend trains
      - Approximately 1,000 daily weekday riders (*It was noted that there are higher ridership levels on the weekend on this Branch)*
      - CTDOT is considering improvements such as passing sidings, signalization, and station upgrades
    - Amtrak: Berlin Station
      - New Haven-Hartford-Springfield (NHHS) line is a part of Northeast Regional service
      - 11 weekday trains / 14 weekend trains
      - Approximately 23,500 annual boardings at Berlin Station
      - The *New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail Project* will increase service and reduce travel times (Construction: 2013 / Service: 2016)
- Freight Rail
  - Freight service is operated in the CCRS Corridor by Pan Am Railways
    - Customers include: LNG (Amerigas), lumber (Forestville Lumber), and a quarry (Tilcon), Bridgestone, Clark/Dedreich, Newsprint (Republican American), and scrap (Albert Brothers)
  - The existing track is single-tracked and unsignalized with maximum speeds of 25 MPH
  - The line includes 21 at-grade crossings, of which 17 have automatic protection
  - The track structure would likely need to be replaced to handle passenger service
  - In addition to Pan-Am, several other freight providers operate near and/or interchange with the Study Corridor
- Transit
  - CTDOT contracts with private service operators through CTTRANSIT for local and express fixed-route bus service in the Study Corridor. There is no fixed route service offered in Plymouth.
  - Inter-city bus service is provided by Greyhound and Peter Pan between Waterbury, New Britain, and Hartford with connections to New Haven, Boston, and New York
  - Paratransit is available throughout the Study Corridor.
  - Rideshare information is provided by CT**rides**, and some employers use private shuttles.
- Other Modes
  - There are many major roadways in the Study Corridor. The only interstate is I-84.
  - There are seven park-and-ride lots in Study Corridor, but none are near rail.
  - There is limited bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the Corridor.

Mr. Gazillo explained that the Study Team surveyed transit users and non-users in person in October 2012 and online from October to December 2012. The surveys had approximately 1,000 respondents. The survey examined travel patterns of corridor residents and employees, including mode split, origins, destinations, desired improvements, trip frequency, etc. The findings of these surveys were published in *Survey Analysis Report* (January 2013), which can be found on the CCRS website

Mr. Gazillo then focused the discussion on the three items on which the Study Team was seeking input – purpose and need statement, preliminary alternatives, and potential station locations. In addition to giving input at the meeting, SAC members will also have the opportunity to submit written comments after the meeting. Comments will be accepted until February 28, 2013.

Mr. Gazillo explained that the Purpose and Need Statement (Handout #1) is not static. Rather, it will become more refined as the Study progresses.

Next, Mr. Gazillo explained that the three categories of preliminary alternatives are No Build, Transportation System Management (TSM), and Build Alternatives. These alternatives are explained in more detail in Handout #2 and will be further developed and refined in Spring 2013.

Mr. Gazillo outlined evaluation criteria for screening the preliminary alternatives, including responsiveness to CCRS Purpose and Need, feasibility, costs, right-of-way and environmental impacts, conformance to relevant State and Federal policies. He noted that ridership will not be an evaluation criterion for the initial "long list" group of alternatives (Preliminary Alternatives). Rather, a ridership model will be applied for three refined alternatives that are to be selected later in the Study.

Mr. Gazillo then discussed a series of station guidelines put forth by the Federal Rail Administration (FRA), including station locations, railroad operations, and considerations for minimizing environmental impact and maximizing development potential. Keeping these guidelines in mind, station locations for the CCRS Study Corridor need to be identified. Waterbury and Berlin have existing stations. In Bristol, there is potential for locating a station next to *Bristol Rising* development. In New Britain, it would be logical to site the rail station next to the *CTfastrak* station to allow for easy transfers between the two modes. Potential station locations have not yet been identified for Plymouth and Plainville, and the Study Teams needs input from the towns on possible station location.

Mr. Gazillo concluded the presentation by outlining the next steps of the CCRS:

- Alternatives Development
    - Spring 2013
- Focus Group Meetings
    - Spring 2013
- Public Meeting
    - June 2013
- SAC Meeting #2
    - Fall 2013

Discussion:

How is the Study Corridor defined? It seems to be defined as the six towns, but this may fail to consider people from towns like Southington that are located close to the rail and would be likely to use it.

- The Study Corridor is defined as the six municipalities through which the rail travels. This is largely due to the infrastructural considerations associated with this Study. Ridership modeling, however, will take into account the potential users from towns outside of the immediate Study Corridor.

How would passenger rail service impact existing bus ridership?

- It is hard to know at this point. Ridership modeling will take into account all modes.

It seems that the objective is to get people out of their cars and into rail or transit. Conceivably would someone be able to get on the rail in Waterbury, transfer to CTfastrak in New Britain, and get to Hartford? If so, how long would such a trip take?

- That trip would definitely be possible. We do not yet know, however, how long it would take. A timetable will be developed as part of a service plan during the course of this Study.

Given the geometry of the line, what speeds are achieved now and what would be possible in the future?

- Currently, freight service operates at approximately 20 MPH. To operate passenger service, the track would need to be fully rebuilt. Even then, travel speeds would likely be a maximum of 40 MPH because of the large number of grade crossings.

Would passenger service be operated as an extension of the Waterbury Branch? Would there be a separate track for passenger trains?

- Operations details for the line have not yet been determined. Operational logistics are complicated by the lack of signalization and single-tracking. While double-tracking will be considered, it is expected to be extremely expensive. Rather, a single track with passing sidings may be the most likely option. Freight and passenger service would share the tracks, and signalization would need to be added. Because there is limited freight service on the line, it likely would not be difficult to develop a passenger schedule around it.

Have costs been developed for any of the alternatives?

- No costs have been developed yet. Once the list of preliminary alternatives is developed, conceptual capital and operating costs will be calculated. More details cost estimates will be developed for the final Short List alternatives.

What about using the rail segment from New Britain to Newington rather than going into Berlin Station?

- That right-of-way is being used for *CTfastrak*, so it is not an option to use it for passenger rail.

It should be noted that Positive Train Control (PTC) is federally mandated, and thus signalization will be required soon.

Will there be significant land takings associated with this project?

- Because the line used to be double-tracked, it is anticipated that very limited land takings will be associated with rebuilding the rail and passing sidings. Land will likely need to be acquired for parking and stations.

There has been significant consideration given to putting a station with the Bristol Rising development. This information should be shared with the Study Team.

- There is a desire to coordinate planning efforts, and sharing information is important. There is some concern about the curve associated with this Bristol site, but it will be examined. Curve modifications will be considered and evaluated in terms of their costs and benefits.

Will the model consider delays to motorists who get stopped at intersections that are blocked by the train at crossings? The distance of stations from major intersections should be considered. Stopped Amtrak trains block major intersections in Meriden.

- The model will not take this into account, but the Study will consider traffic impacts in its evaluation of alternatives.

What is the cost of this Study, and how is it being funded?

- The Study costs $1 million, and it is funded by a bond-issue from the State.

It will be important to consider how rail ridership will impact congestion on I-84.

- We recognize that the rail, bus, and road travel is all tied together. The ridership modeling will take into account all modes.

Will the busway be incorporated into the model when it isn't yet operational?

- Yes.

Who will own the rail once it is rebuilt?

- This is a policy issue. Currently, Pan-Am owns the line. The improvements will be publically funded. It is possible that Pan-Am would own the line and grant operating rights to the rail for passenger service.

Does CTDOT have rights to use the rail now?

- No. If passenger service were to occur, there would be a need to develop usage agreements. It should be noted that Pan-Am has been very cooperative and open to dialogue regarding the CCRS.

What would the impacts be to freight during construction?

- It will be important to stage and schedule construction with consideration of freight operations. It is anticipated that construction will be able to be completed with minimal impact.

When will the Study be presented to the public?

- It is anticipated that the first series of public meetings will occur in late Spring 2013 (specific dates have not yet been set). The Study Team wants to make sure there is substantive information to show the public before holding these meetings. The meetings will be held in the evening in various locations throughout the Study Corridor.

Bus service to Plymouth should be considered.

- This will likely be included as part of the TSM alternative.

Is it possible to see the line?

- Pan-Am does not have an inspection train. Hi-rail trips may be a possibility.

Station Locations

- Corridor Towns should discuss potential locations, and provide feedback to the Study Team.
- The original station in Plymouth is now privately owned.

Purpose and Need Statement

- Line 10: Is there actually congestion in the Study Corridor?
  - Yes. Route 6 is very congested, especially during peak periods. Improvements to this road are scheduled. Passenger service could also potentially alleviate some congestion on I-84.
- Line 8: What is the Waterbury Secondary?
  - This is the Pan-Am line from Waterbury to Berlin.

Alternatives

- A hybrid alternative should be considered: rail from Waterbury to Bristol them *CTfastrak* to New Britain.

SAC members are asked to submit written comments by February 28, 2013 regarding the three items on which the Study Team is seeking input – purpose and need statement, preliminary alternatives, and potential station locations. Comments can be sent to Cara Radzins at cara.radzins@urs.com.

Attachments:

1. List of Attendees
2. Meeting Presentation
3. Meeting Handout #1 – Purpose and Need Statement
4. Meeting Handout #2 – Preliminary Long List of Alternatives

Attendees:

Name	Agency
Study Advisory Committee Members	
Rob Aloise	Capitol Region Council of Governments
Mike Nicastro	Central Connecticut Chambers of Commerce
Tim Malone	Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency
Carl Stephani	Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency
Mayor Art Ward	City of Bristol
Kathleen McNamara	City of Waterbury
Ron Pugliese	City of Waterbury
Peter Dorpalen	Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley
Sam Gold	Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley
Jim Cameron	CT Metro-North Rail Commuter Council
Maya Loewenberg	CTDECD
Fred Reise	CTDEEP
Maureen Lawrence	CTDOT - Bureau of Public Transportation
Sara Radasci	CTDOT - Bureau of Public Transportation
Sam Bellucci	CTDOT - Office of Rail
Russell McDermott	CTrides
Daniel Forest	CTSHPO
Philip Fry	CTTRANSIT
Mayor Vincent Festa, Jr.	Town of Plymouth
Theodore Scheidel	Town of Plymouth
Anthony Lorenzetti	Town of Plymouth
John DiCarlo	Waterbury Regional Chamber of Commerce
Study Team Members	
Andy Davis	CTDOT - Bureau of Policy and Planning
David Head	CTDOT - Bureau of Policy and Planning
Molly Parsons	CTDOT - Bureau of Policy and Planning
Stephen Gazillo	URS Corporation
Tim Holland	URS Corporation
Cara Radzins	URS Corporation
Carmine Trotta	URS Corporation
Additional Interested Parties	
Bill Mascetti	ACG North America, Inc.
Diane Church	Bristol Press
Michelle Boyko	Bristol Rising
Dick Lavery	Bristol Rising
John Kucinskas	Business Owner
Al Galanty	Naugatuck Railroad
Charlie Talmadge	Renaissance Downtowns at Bristol
Mark Walerysiak, Jr.	Renaissance Downtowns at Bristol

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT
RAIL STUDY

STUDY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #1

FEBRUARY 7, 2013

BRISTOL, CT

URS

Agenda

1. Introductions

2. Study Overview and Schedule

3. Completed Activities
   - Base Mapping
   - Review of Previous Studies
   - Existing Conditions Report
   - Intercept and Online Surveys

4. Current Activities
   - Purpose and Need Statement
   - Preliminary Alternatives Development and Evaluation
   - Station Guidelines and Potential Locations

5. Next Steps

1. Introductions

2. Study Overview and Schedule

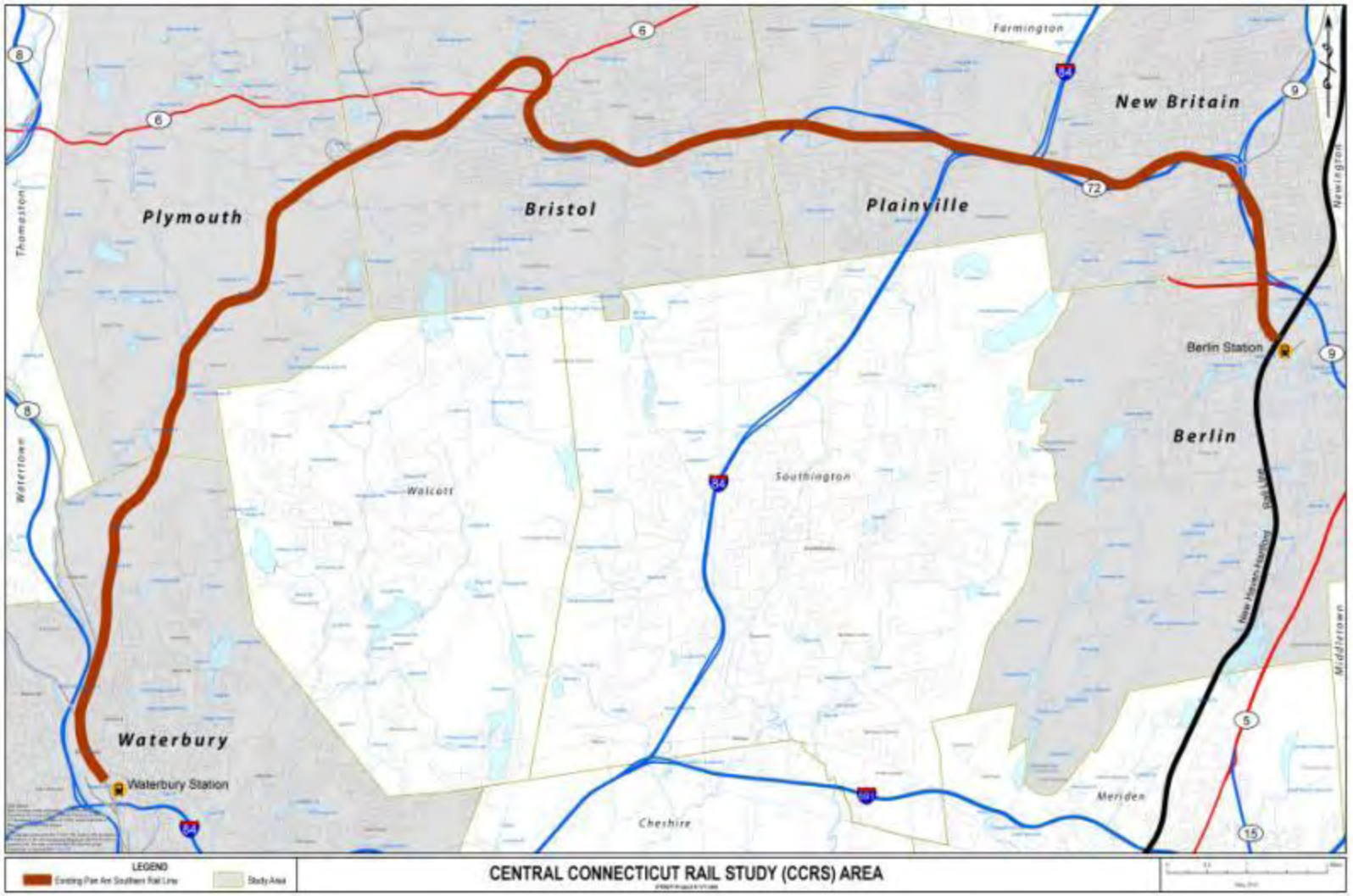
Study Overview

- Transportation Planning Study and Market Analysis to determine the **need** and **feasibility** of enhanced passenger rail or transit service between Waterbury and Berlin

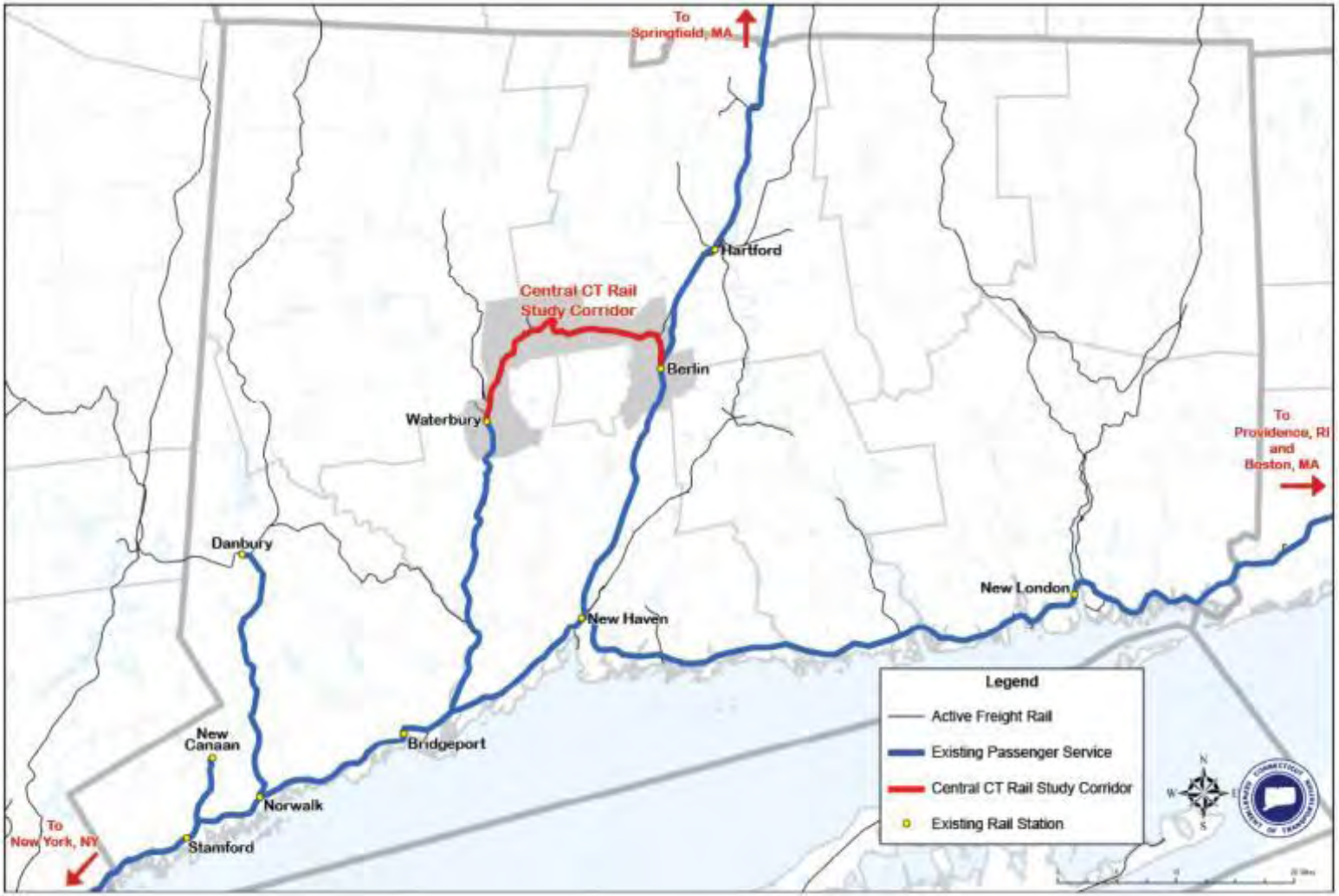
- Consideration of existing and future freight service

- Study Website
  - www.centralctrailstudy.com
  - Documents, updates, news, etc.

Study Overview: Corridor Map



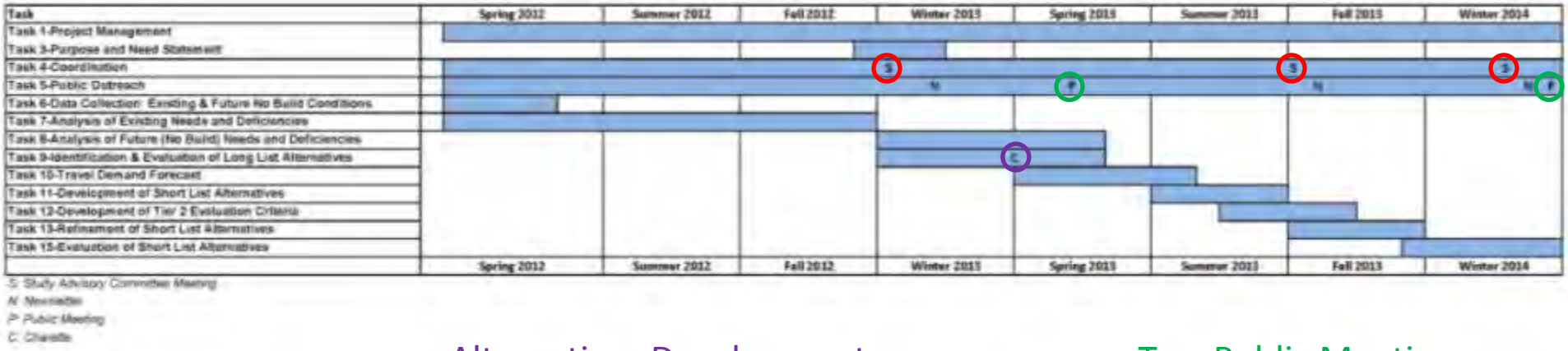
Study Overview: Regional Context



Study Schedule

Three SAC Meetings:

- Winter 2013
- Fall 2013
- Winter 2014



Alternatives Development:

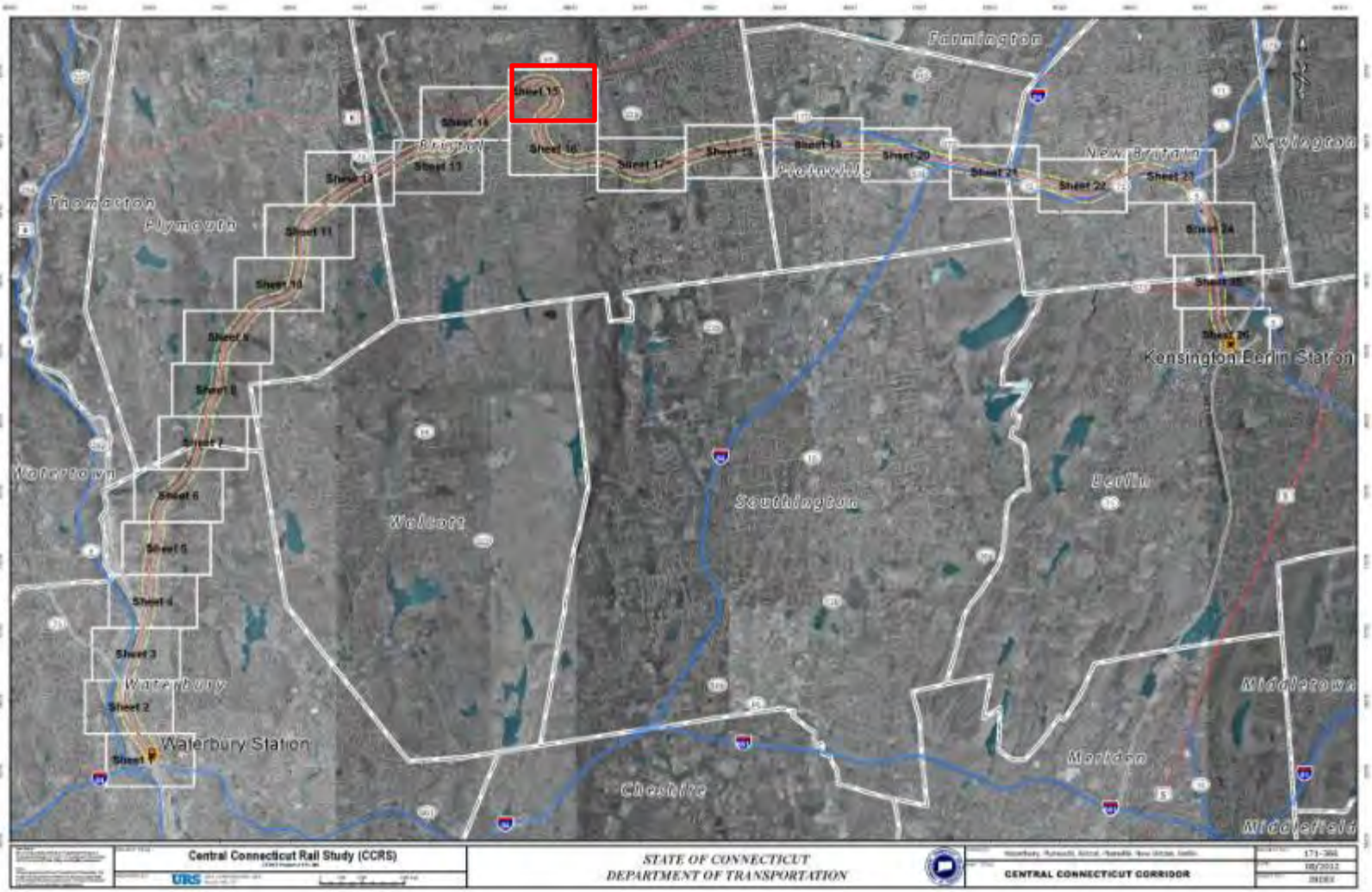
- Spring 2013

Two Public Meetings:

- Spring 2013
- Winter 2014

3. Completed Activities

Base Mapping



Base Mapping

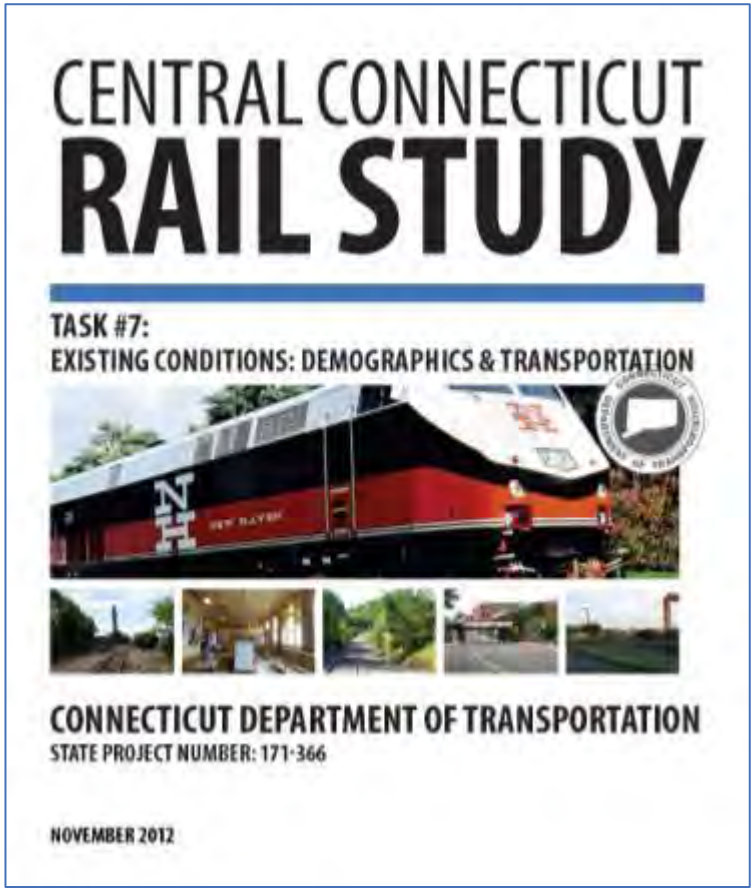
Review of Previous Studies

- Completed in June 2012

- Studies reviewed for information to inform CCRS:
  - 2012-2016 State Rail Plan for the State of Connecticut (DRAFT), 2012
  - Waterbury-New Canaan Branch Line Feasibility Study, 2010
  - Busway West: Busway Accessibility Enhancement Plan, 2004
  - Hartford West Major Investment Study, 2003
  - Connecticut CTDOT Statewide Bus System Study, 2000
  - Report of the Feasibility of Implementing Waterbury-Hartford Commuter Rail Service, 1992
  - Hartford-Waterbury Rail Passenger Study, 1982

Existing Conditions Report

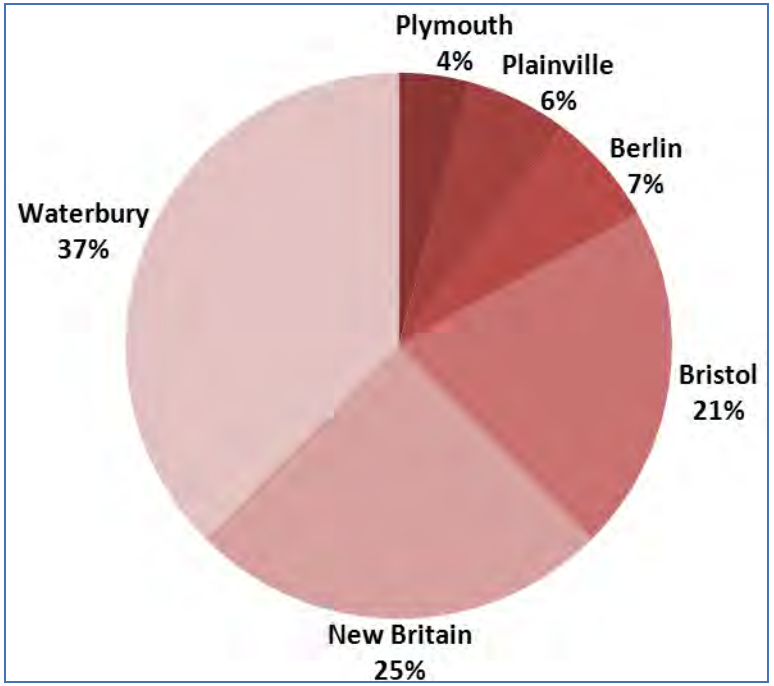
- *Existing Conditions: Demographics and Transportation*
- Completed November 2012
- Purpose was to identify:
  - Current demographic and socioeconomic conditions
  - Transportation services and infrastructure



Existing Conditions: Population

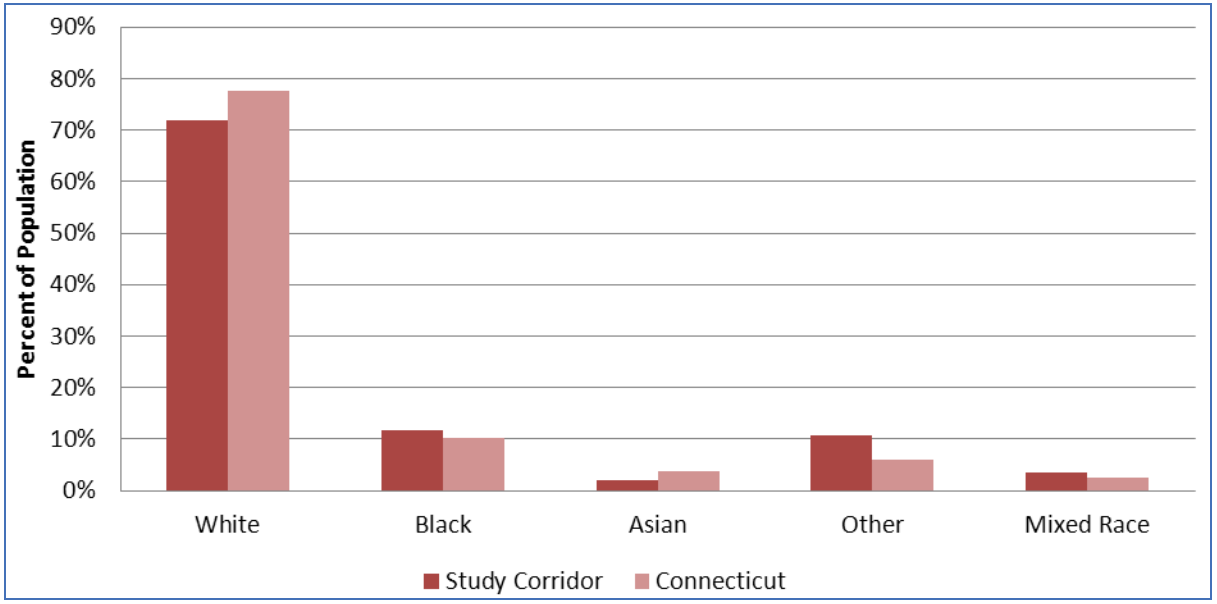
- 293,874 residents in the Study Corridor
  - 2.7% growth between 2000 and 2010
    - Lower than CT rate of 4.9%

- New Britain, Waterbury, and Bristol are larger and more densely populated than the other corridor municipalities



Existing Conditions: Race

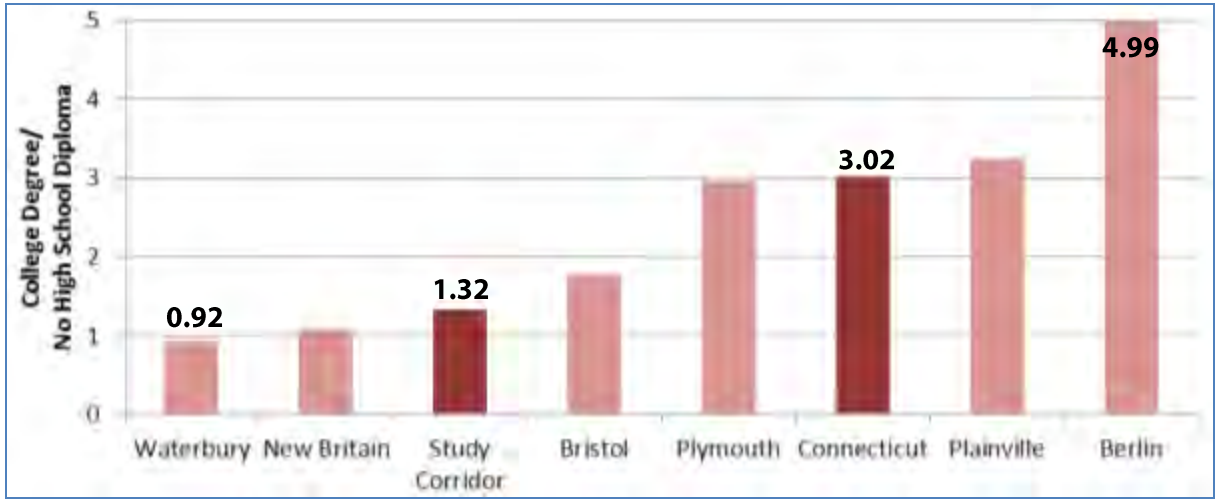
- Study Corridor is more racially diverse than the State as a whole
  - Due to populations of New Britain and Waterbury



Existing Conditions: Income and Education

- Study Corridor has lower income and educational attainment levels than the State

Ratio of College Graduates to Individuals Who Did Not Finish High School*



*This ratio is defined as "For every **1** person who has not finished high school in a given area, there are **X** individuals who have completed at least a Bachelor Degree."*

Median Household Income

Town	Median Household Income
Waterbury	$40,254
Plymouth	$71,630
Bristol	$58,537
Plainville	$63,447
New Britain	$39,706
Berlin	$86,211
Study Corridor	**$59,964**
Connecticut	**$67,740**

Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010

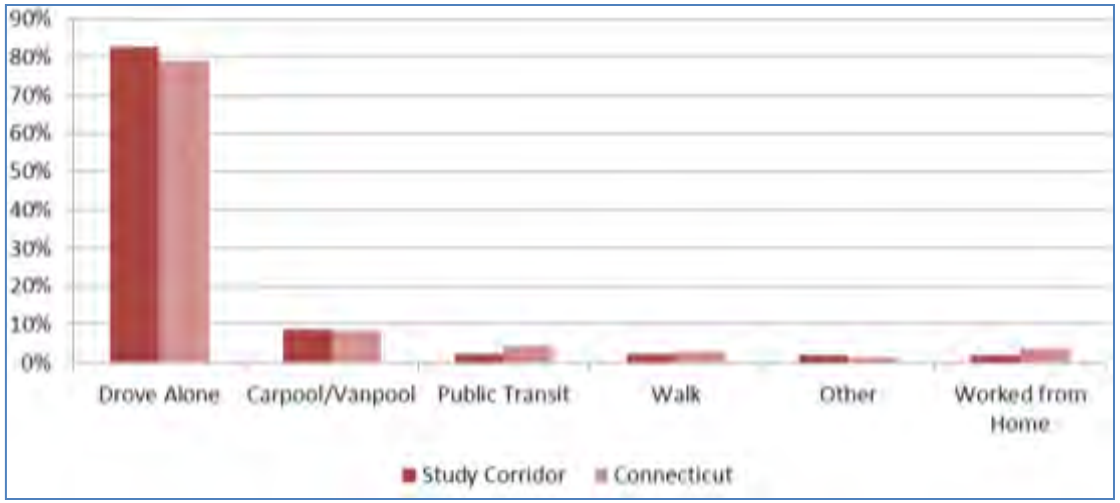
Existing Conditions: Modal Split

- *Modal Split: categorizes the way workers travel to/from work each day*

- Study Corridor is similar to Connecticut, but with less transit and more driving alone

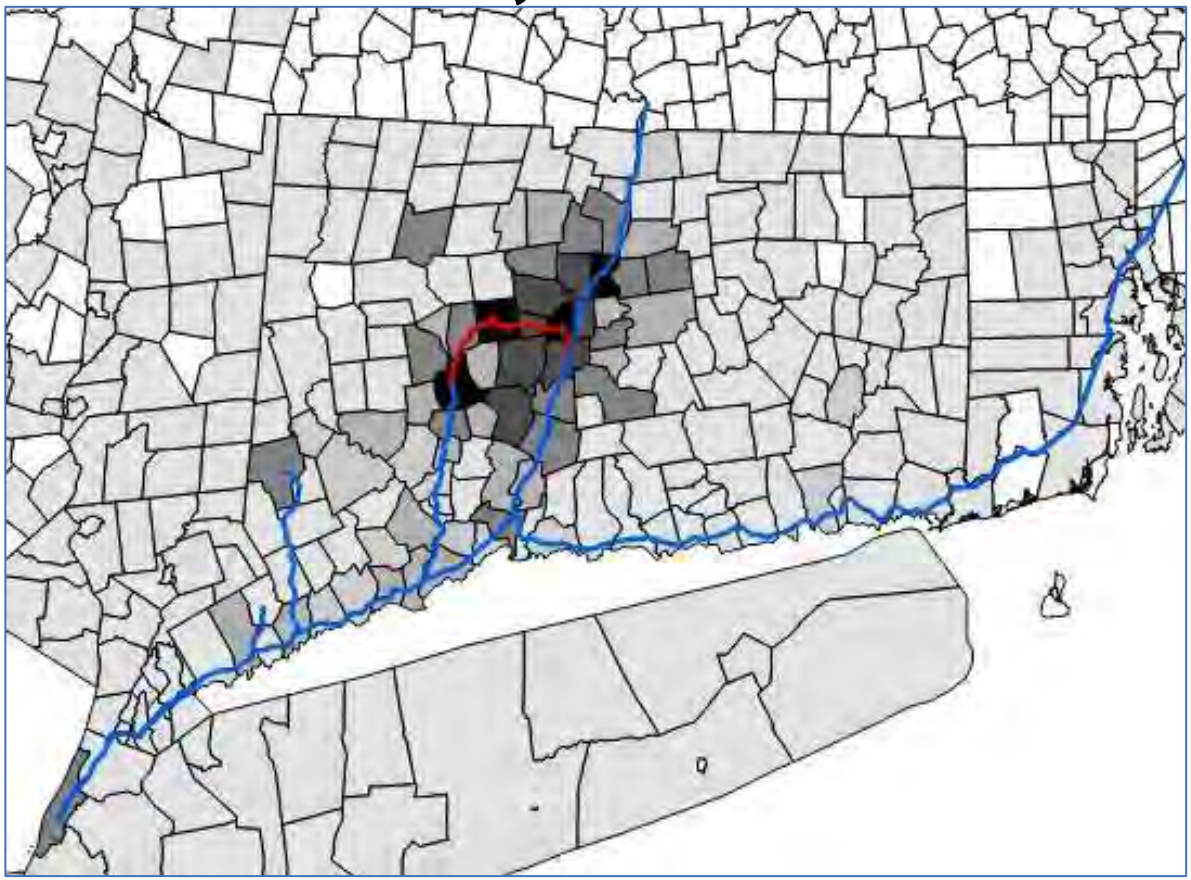
- Drive Alone:
  - State: 79.1%
  - Corridor: 82.8%

- Public Transit:
  - State = 4.4%
  - Waterbury = 4.3%



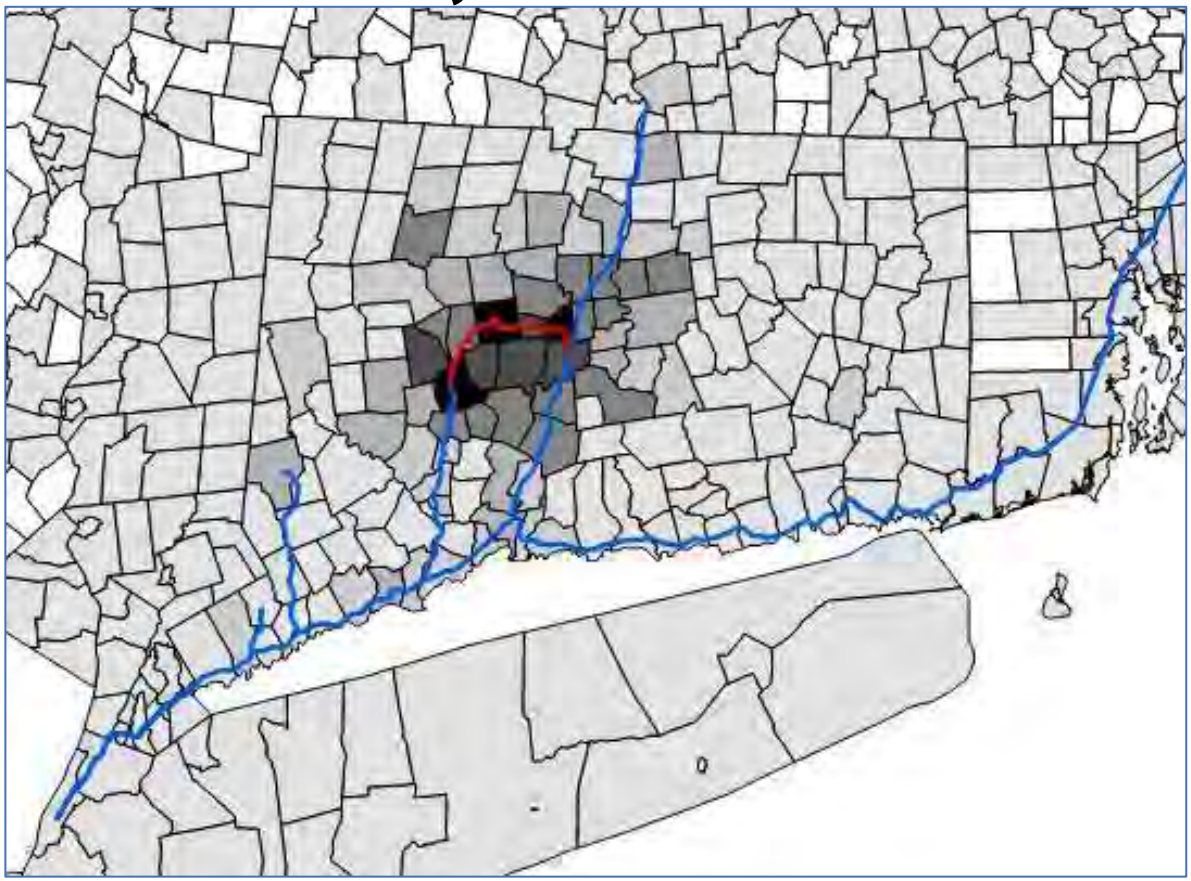
Existing Conditions: Work Locations of Corridor Residents

- 22.8% work in same town as where they live
- 11.6 % work elsewhere in the Study Corridor
- 23.3% work in Hartford County
- 1,750 people work in NYC (1.4%)



Existing Conditions: Home Locations of Corridor Employees

- 26.2% live in the same town as where they work
- 13.3% live elsewhere in the Study Corridor
- 19.0% live in Hartford County
- 557 people live in NYC (0.5%)



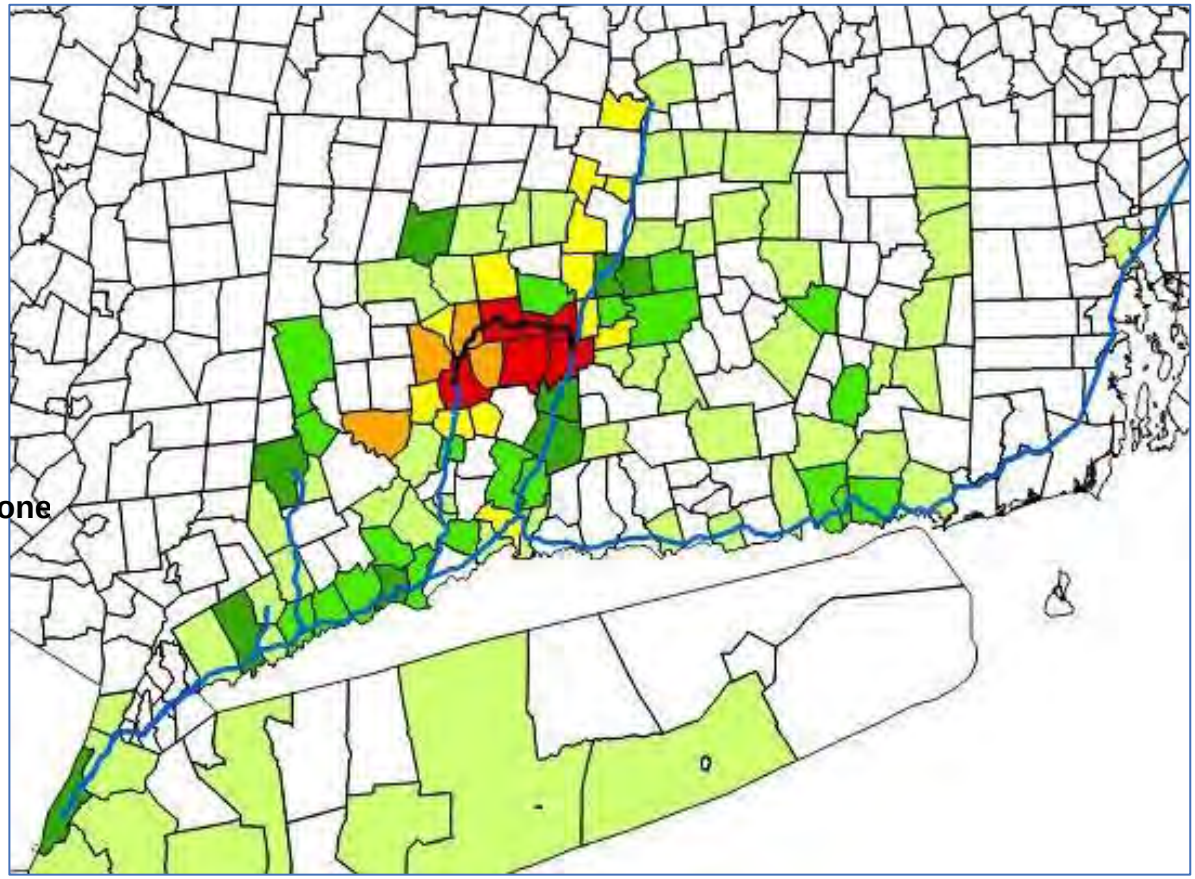
Existing Conditions: All Corridor Work Trips

- Majority of trips occur within the Study Corridor
- Interchange between the Study Corridor and NYC (2,307 / 1%)
- Concentration of trips in towns along rail

*Trips made by people who live and work in the Study Corridor are only counted once

Existing Conditions: All Corridor Work Trips, 2000 vs. 2010

- Fewer people commuting within the Study Corridor
  - Signals a move to a more regional economy
- Largest Losses:
  - Bristol (-4,251)
  - New Britain (-3,881)
  - Waterbury (-3,284)
- Largest Gains:
  - Hartford (1,684)
  - Manhattan (1,185)
  - Torrington (1,152)



*Trips made by people who live and work in the Study Corridor are only counted once

Existing Conditions: Passenger Rail

- Study Corridor had passenger service until 1960, though none exists today

Steam Locomotive at Highland Junction, 1947

- The municipalities on the ends of the Corridor are served by passenger rail
  - Waterbury: Terminus of Metro-North Railroad (MNR) Waterbury Branch
  - Berlin: Stop on Amtrak's New Haven-Hartford-Springfield line

Existing Conditions: Passenger Rail

- **Metro-North Railroad**: Waterbury Station
  - Waterbury Branch runs from Bridgeport off of the New Haven Mainline
  - 15 weekday trains / 10 weekend trains
  - Approximately 1,000 daily weekday riders
  - CTDOT is considering improvements such as passing sidings, signalization, and station upgrades

- **Amtrak**: Berlin Station
  - New Haven-Hartford-Springfield (NHHS) line is a part of Northeast Regional service
  - 11 weekday trains / 14 weekend trains
  - Approximately 23,500 annual boardings at Berlin Station
  - The *New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail Project* will increase service and reduce travel times
    - Construction: 2013 / Service: 2016

Existing Conditions: Freight Rail

- Freight service is operated in the CCRS Corridor by Pan Am Railways

- Customers include:
  - Southington/Plainville: LNG (Amerigas), lumber (Forestville Lumber), and a quarry (Tilcon)
  - Bristol: Bridgestone and Clark/Dedreich
  - Waterbury: Newsprint (Republican American) and scrap (Albert Brothers)

Existing Conditions: Freight Rail Infrastructure

- Single-tracked, maximum speed of 25 MPH
- 21 at-grade crossings
  - 17 with automatic protection
- 11 overhead bridges, 2 tunnels
- No signalization
- Track structure would likely need to be replaced to handle passenger service

Typical conditions observed in a rock cut area, including overgrown vegetation, obstructed drainage swales, and fouled ballast

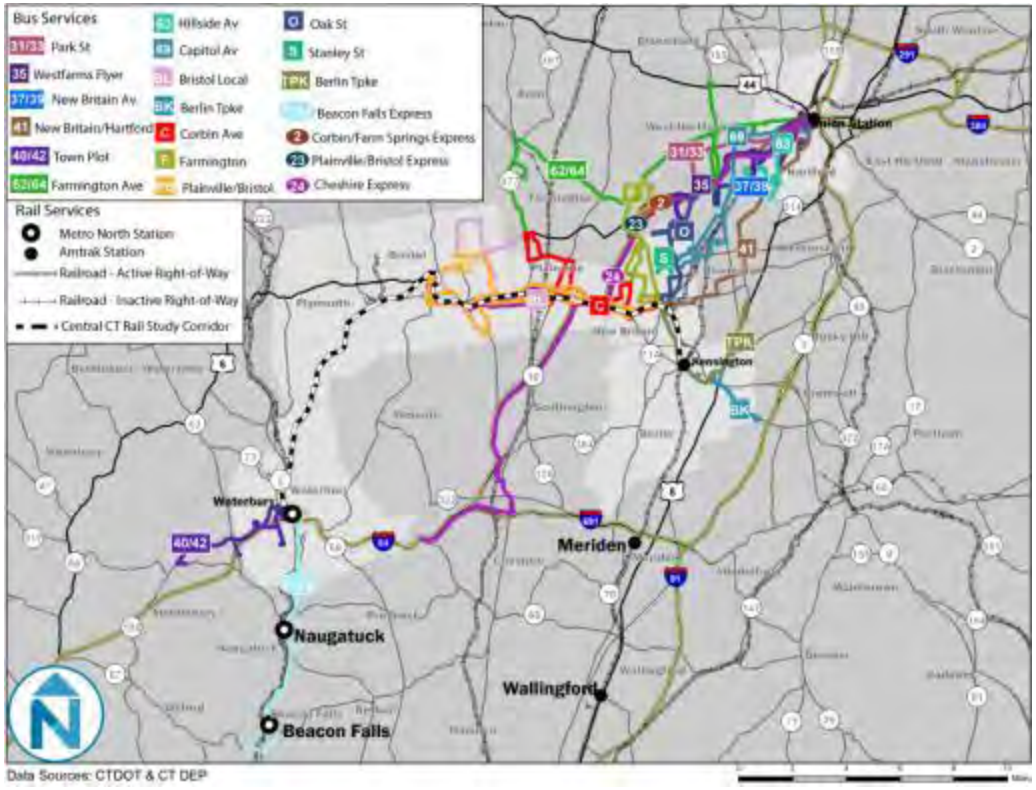
Existing Conditions: Other Freight Rail providers

- Several other freight providers operate near and/or interchange with the Study Corridor
  - Connecticut Southern Railroad (CSO) / RailAmerica
  - CSX
  - Naugatuck Railroad Company
  - Norfolk Southern Railroad
  - Providence and Worcester Railroad (P&W)

Existing Conditions: Local & Express Bus Service

CTDOT contracts with private service operators through CTTRANSIT

- Waterbury
  - North East Transportation
- Berlin, New Britain, Bristol, Plainville
  - New Britain Transportation Company (Local)
  - DATTCO (Express)
- Plymouth
  - No fixed route service



Existing Conditions: Inter-City Transit

- Bus
  - Provided jointly by Greyhound and Peter Pan
  - Waterbury – New Britain – Hartford
  - Connections to New Haven, Boston, and New York

- Rail
  - Amtrak
  - Metro-North Railroad

Existing Conditions: Paratransit & Rideshare

- Paratransit
  - North East Transportation – Waterbury Area
  - Central Connecticut Paratransit
  - Greater Hartford Transportation District ADA Paratransit

- Rideshare
  - CT**rides**
  - Private employer-operated shuttles

Existing Conditions: Other Modes

- Major Roadways
  - Interstate 84
  - Routes 6, 8, 9, 10, 69, 71, 72, 177, 229, 372
- Park & Ride Lots
  - 7 lots in Study Corridor
  - None near rail, but most served by bus
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities
  - Limited bicycle infrastructure
  - Limited pedestrian infrastructure, except in parts of cities and downtown areas

Intercept and Online Surveys

- Surveyed transit users and non-users in person and online (October – December 2012)
- Examined travel patterns of corridor residents and employees, including mode split, origins, destinations, desired improvements, trip frequency, etc.
- Findings published in ***Survey Analysis Report*** (January 2013), which can be found on the CCRS website

4. Current Activities

Purpose & Need Statement
Draft for SAC Review

The purpose of the Central Connecticut Rail Study (CCRS) is to identify opportunities and develop a recommended plan to improve public transportation options for the traveling public in the Central Connecticut Rail Corridor between Waterbury and Berlin, CT.

The CCRS will address several transportation-related concerns in the study corridor, identified through technical analysis, public input and agency involvement. The study will examine ways to help meet the following:

- Need to maintain and improve existing freight rail service on the Waterbury Secondary
- Need to improve the Central Connecticut Corridor modal and intermodal connections
- Need to reduce automobile congestion in the Study Corridor
- Need to improve intercity transit mobility between Waterbury, Bristol, New Britain, and Hartford
- Need to increase Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) opportunities within the Study Corridor

Preliminary Alternative: No Build

- Base scenario for the CCRS corridor if no transit improvements are implemented

- Assumes that only planned projects with committed funds will be constructed
  - Ct*fastrak*
  - New Haven-Hartford-Springfield improvements

Preliminary Alternative: Transportation System Management

- "Best that can be done" to optimize facilities and operations without a major capital investment
- Operational upgrades to existing transit services and low-cost physical improvements
- The TSM alternatives would complement (and/or include) improvements identified in CT*fastrak* and NHHS programs and would include Enhanced Bus service

Preliminary Alternative: Build Alternatives

- BRT Alternative
  - Extension of CT*fastrak* into CCRS Corridor
- Heavy Rail Alternatives
  - Commuter Rail Service
  - Inter-city Passenger Rail
- Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternative

**These alternatives will be further defined during a workshop with SAC members and the Study Team*

Preliminary Alternatives: Evaluation Criteria

- Response to CCRS Purpose and Need
- Feasibility of Implementation
- Capital and Operating Costs
- Right-of-Way Impacts
- Critical Environmental Constraints
- Conformance to FTA, FRA, EPA, DEEP, and CTDOT requirements and policies
- Market Analysis & Traveler Surveys

Station Guidelines*

Station Location Fundamentals:

- Optimize number of stations
  - For the CCRS, each town in the Study Corridor should have one station
- Locate stations in or near CBD where possible
  - Centrally located is highly desirable
- Emphasize interconnectivity of each station with regional and local transportation system
- Parking availability

**USDOT, Federal Railroad Administration, "Railroad Corridor Transportation Plans – A guidance manual" (2005)*

Station Guidelines (cont'd)

Railroad Operating Characteristics :

- Stations should be located on tangent track and curves should be avoided
- Length of a corridor platform should be as long as the longest anticipated passenger train
- Compliance with Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Compatibility with freight operations

Station Guidelines (cont'd)

Other Considerations:

- Avoid significant environmental impacts
- Consider potential for Transit Oriented Development
- Encourage walkability and bicycle access
- MAP-21 (2012-2014)
  - Eliminates Alternatives Analysis (AA) requirement
  - Reduces number of steps in FTA approval process
  - Creates 2-year project development phase

Station Locations

- Waterbury & Berlin
  - Existing rail stations
- Bristol
  - Potential for locating a station next to *Bristol Rising* development
- New Britain
  - Next to *CTfastrak* station
- Plymouth & Plainville
  - Potential station locations have not yet been identified
  - Need input from towns

5. Next Steps

Next Steps

- Alternatives Development
  - Spring 2013
- Focus Group Meetings
  - Spring 2013
- Public Meeting
  - June 2013
- SAC Meeting #2
  - Fall 2013

Discussion

URS

MEETING HANDOUT

Client: CTDOT
Job Number: 171-366
Project Name: Central Connecticut Rail Study
Meeting: Study Advisory Committee Meeting #1
Date: February 7, 2013

Handout #1
Draft Purpose and Need Statement

The purpose of the Central Connecticut Rail Study (CCRS) is to identify opportunities and develop a recommended plan to improve public transportation options for the traveling public in the Central Connecticut Rail Corridor between Waterbury and Berlin, CT.

The CCRS will address several transportation-related concerns in the study corridor, identified through technical analysis, public input and agency involvement. The study will examine ways to help meet the following:

- Need to maintain and improve existing freight rail service on the Waterbury Secondary
- Need to improve the Central Connecticut Corridor modal and intermodal connections
- Need to reduce automobile congestion in the Study Corridor
- Need to improve intercity transit mobility between Waterbury, Bristol, New Britain, and Hartford
- Need to increase Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) opportunities within the Study Corridor

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MEETING HANDOUT

Client: CTDOT
Job Number: 171-366
Project Name: Central Connecticut Rail Study
Meeting: Study Advisory Committee Meeting #1
Date: February 7, 2013

Handout #2
Preliminary Long List of Alternatives

No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative establishes the base scenario for the CCRS corridor if no transit improvements are implemented. The No Build alternative for the CCRS corridor between Waterbury and Berlin assumes that only planned projects with committed funds will be constructed. This includes construction of CT*fastrak*, the 9.4-mile bus rapid transit line connecting New Britain and Hartford, and the initiation of new commuter rail service connecting New Haven, Hartford, and Springfield, MA (NHHS).

Within the CCRS corridor, these projects include the following improvements: CT*fastrak* plans include improvements to existing and implementation of new express bus service between Hartford, New Britain, and Waterbury (both the Waterbury Express and the Cheshire-Southington Express). The NHHS commuter rail service will include stops at the Berlin rail station.

Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternative

Transportation System Management (TSM) represents the "best that can be done" to optimize facilities and operations without a major capital investment. This is accomplished through operational upgrades to existing transit services and low-cost physical improvements. A TSM Alternative is among those considered for all projects funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and will be developed in more detail if FTA funding is pursued as a result of this study. The TSM alternatives would complement (and/or include) improvements identified in CT*fastrak* and NHHS programs and include Enhanced Bus service connecting Waterbury, Bristol, Plainville, and Berlin. Specific segments will also be considered, including service from Downtown Bristol to Downtown New Britain.

Build Alternatives

<u>Extension of CT*fastrak* into CCRS Corridor</u>

This alternative would extend the CT*fastrak* line through Plainville and Bristol to Waterbury and would include construction of a dedicated busway that would provide a one-seat ride between these communities. This alternative would address the need to provide a transit alternative between Waterbury and Bristol and also from Bristol to Berlin.

Heavy Rail Alternatives

Currently there is no passenger rail service connecting the existing Waterbury rail station to Bristol, Plainville, New Britain, or Berlin. Passenger service along this rail corridor, formerly known as the Highland Line, was discontinued in 1960, and currently only freight service operated by Pan Am Railways exists. This alternative would restore bidirectional passenger rail service between Waterbury and Berlin, with stops in Plymouth, Bristol, Plainville, and New Britain. Two types of rail service are included in this alternative: Commuter Rail and Intercity Passenger Rail. All rail service will be operated using diesel rolling stock along refurbished/rebuilt trackage owned by Pan Am Railways. All stations would include high-level platforms. Length of platforms and equipment consist size will be evaluated pending existing infrastructure, grade crossings, and availability of space. The two rail service options include:

Commuter Rail Service: Waterbury-Bristol-Plainville-New Britain-Berlin

Under this alternative, 24 miles of new commuter rail service would be built between Waterbury and Berlin along the existing Pan Am Railways trackage. Bidirectional rail service would operate between the existing Waterbury and Berlin rail stations, with stops in Plymouth, Bristol, Plainville, and New Britain, connecting in Waterbury to the Waterbury Branch service operated by Metro-North and in Berlin to the future New Haven-Hartford-Springfield commuter rail service. In New Britain, the new commuter rail service would provide a connection to the CT*fastrak* station. The commuter rail service would be similar to the existing Shoreline East service operated by Amtrak for CTDOT. During AM and PM peak hours, service would operate every half hour. During off-peak hours service would operate every hour. Service would operate every two hours between 8 AM and 10 PM will on weekends and holidays.

An option to provide service in segments will also be considered. This option would include bidirectional commuter rail service between Bristol and Waterbury as a potential extension of existing Waterbury Branch service. This service would offer Bristol residents the option of connecting to existing rail service to Grand Central Terminal, NYC.

A second option would be to provide limited commuter rail service between Bristol and Berlin, connecting to Hartford along the NHHS line, though this option is less attractive given slower speeds required due to curves, grade crossings and track geometry.

Intercity Passenger Rail: Hartford-Berlin-New Britain- Bristol-Waterbury-Bridgeport

This alternative would provide bidirectional intercity rail service between Hartford and Bridgeport via newly restored passenger service along the Waterbury-Berlin rail corridor. It is anticipated that the intercity passenger service would operate every three hours from 6 AM to 10 PM. Intercity service would make stops at Waterbury, Bristol, New Britain, and Berlin. Service between Waterbury and Bridgeport would follow existing Waterbury Branch schedules and service between Berlin and Hartford would follow the planned NHHS service schedules.

Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternative

The Light Rail Transit (LRT) alternative would provide service from Waterbury to Berlin along the existing right-of-way (or in close proximity) but using separate, newly constructed tracks, possibly in the abandoned second track right-of-way alongside the Pan Am Railways freight tracks. Track alignment options will be further evaluated in the Long List Tech Memo. A variation on conventional LRT service is modern streetcar service, which would include a combination of in-street running and dedicated right-of-way. In both the LRT and Modern Streetcar alternative, service would operate every 15 minutes during AM and PM peak hours and every half hour during off peak hours. Hourly service would be provided on weekends.